

Dear WCEA Members,

For the past several days I have been reviewing the e-mails and comments regarding the recent action of the Board in removing Mr. Kelly from the Negotiation Committee and comments regarding the Board of Directors.

First let me begin with my disappointment in this entire issue. While Mr. Kelly has a right to his opinion of being unfairly treated, I am shocked and amazed at some of the comments and accusations leveled at the Board and him especially from people who were not present at the meeting!

As with all organizations, clubs, and families we will have disagreements and dissension. Not everyone is going to agree, but we can disagree without being disagreeable. I think it is important to point out some things that have occurred in the past and put things in perspective.

These are unprecedented times. I want you all to remember, myself and my part time secretary are the only "paid" employees of the Association. Your Board of Directors volunteers their time and energy to you every day. During the past three years, your Board and the negotiation committee have fought to minimize impacts of this economy from hitting everyone's doorstep. The Board members are employees just like you! They too are working under the same conditions you are. They are in departments that have staffing shortages, they have had their own jobs threatened to outsourcing, and they have fought valiantly to keep the county in check by directing both myself and our attorney. They were also split on the rolling of concessions as Ms. Rasmussen advised you in the meeting. They vote just like you do.

Mr. Kelly has been a very active participant in this Association both by being a Board member and as an employee representative. He too has his opinions and is a force to be reckoned with in his zeal to preserve employee rights and benefits. Both sides are to be commended even when they do not agree how to achieve that end.

I have had occasions to disagree with both actions taken by this Board, and also with Mr. Kelly on some issues as well. Both sides are passionate and both are trying to do what they feel is best for the membership. The Board took an action that they felt was in the best interest of the membership, and Mr. Kelly has appealed it as he disagrees with it.

This entire issue has done what management has not been able to do for the past thirty plus years I have been associated with the county, and that is turning you all against each other. Please keep in mind the Board is not the enemy and neither is Mr. Kelly! **Management is who we need to focus our attention on!**

I wish you members were as passionate in voicing your displeasure at; the county outsourcing our jobs, reclassifying positions to reduce wages, having the Board of County Commissioners publicly supporting all anti-collective bargaining bills that were introduced in the legislature, refusing to consider to implement the GST to ensure we can continue to provide the service level to our community we take pride in, etc. as you have been about this vote and the general membership meeting! All of those things

have a much greater impact on your paychecks and your well-being than this issue. I wish you all were this engaged to show up at the two town hall meetings and voice those issues and be as vitriol as you have been in this issue!

After our last general membership meeting one of our employees was called in by his supervisor and chastised about an issue he brought up in the meeting. Obviously when I found out about it, I immediately called the county manager and voiced the outrage by your Board of Directors that our employees should be able to freely speak in our meetings without retribution. The moral of this story is we had someone go run to management and tell them what occurred in our meeting, so this Board and myself are somewhat circumspect in answering some questions in that forum after that experience.

It is not that you don't deserve answers, but sometimes you will hear what we said the other night when Mr. Kelly asked what happened to the issues the negotiating committee put forward. The county rejected them. The county requested and we settled on putting out to the vote of our membership the most pressing issue which was the willingness of our members to continue the wage concession or not, until we negotiate the successor agreement. As Penny said, we chose to do so to reduce any impact again of having a lump sum being deducted from your paycheck at some future date.

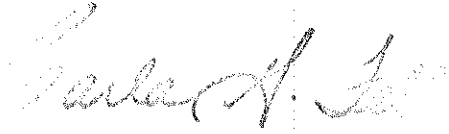
This issue of rolling over our concessions has been very frustrating. We have had several meetings with the county labor representative and we have had requests going back and forth, but remember this is not a negotiation, it was a request of our membership. We tried to get some things they rejected and we agreed to put the vote out to our membership, knowing we are entering into negotiations. The other bargaining groups were also offered only to continue their concessions; I believe the press release says six of the eight have.

There was no conspiracy in counting the votes from both units together. I partially take blame in that as I had our new secretary put a ballot box out at our office to get votes from those who showed up to vote and we put them all in the same box. When I showed up for the meeting I brought the same box and just continued the same thing. Since everyone is taking a wage concession, there was never a thought to separate the vote.

I find it ironic that members complained about not having a seven day notice for the general membership meeting. When we originally thought the county was going to answer our original proposal I specifically had Stacey Jackson put out an e-mail for the general membership meeting on a Friday. Not only did I get several e-mails from members upset about a meeting on a Friday night, but we were also accused of trying to "limit" the membership votes by having the meeting on a Friday!!! Unfortunately, the county did not get back to us with the reply to our proposal so we canceled the meeting. So not only does the Board get accused of not following the by-laws by scheduling a special meeting without a seven day notice. When I tried to schedule a meeting to ensure a seven day notice, some were unhappy because it didn't fit into their schedule!

In closing, this issue is being dealt with. Mr. Kelly has asked for a hearing to be reinstated, and Ms. Rasmussen has granted it. Let's move on folks and if you want to be passionate please do so by showing

up at a Board meeting, or when we ask, and quit sending e-mails through the county system that county management gets to look at and relish that their plan is working as designed!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carla Fells".

Carla Fells, Executive Director